

Subcommittee on
**International Terrorism
and Nonproliferation**

Chairman Ed Royce, 40th District California

Press Release

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Royce Reviews the State Department's Annual Report on Terrorism

WASHINGTON, DC -- Chairman Ed Royce (CA-40) made the following statement at the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation hearing, "Reviewing the State Department's Annual Report on Terrorism." Royce said:

"The State Department recently released its congressionally mandated *Country Reports on Terrorism* for 2005. As Members may recall, this report has been controversial the last two years. Media attention surrounding this year's release has focused on the skyrocketing number of terrorist attacks reported for 2005. Last year, the National Counterterrorism Center recorded 11,111 terrorist incidents worldwide, resulting in 14,602 deaths, 56 of which were Americans. As we will hear, NCTC cites three reasons for this increase: a broader definition of "terrorism," a more comprehensive data set, and Iraq.

"I would like to commend the State Department for its consultation with the Committee prior this report's release. Before last year's controversial reporting changes, Congress was not consulted. The better consultation is appreciated.

"The report for 2005 includes a "Strategic Assessment" of terrorism, which is summarized as follows: "Overall, we are still in the first phase of a potentially long war. The enemy's proven ability to adapt means we will probably go through several more cycles of action/reaction before the war's outcome is no longer in doubt. It is likely that we will face a resilient enemy for years to come." The State Department is right to put the terrorist threat in stark terms, because the American public needs to ready for what is likely to be a decades-long struggle. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons many countries don't view counter-terrorism as a top priority, which is a great challenge to us.

"You are to be commended, Ambassador Crumpton, for giving Pakistan blunt criticism over the weekend when traveling in Afghanistan - yet, when we read the Pakistan analysis in this report, we are left with a positive impression of its counter-terrorism efforts. Your words will fade, as will mine, but reports are to be more lasting. Similarly, no concerns are raised about Mexico, even its border security policies and practices. The U.S. can do better in combating terrorism, we certainly should expect more of Mexico too. Indeed, Subcommittee Members in past years have been frustrated by the lack of

negative information on other governments. Kenya and Canada are among the few countries receiving critical treatment this year. The State Department might also consider doing more to standardize the country reports so that comparable information is reported.

"In general terms, the report describes well an adaptive and resilient enemy. Yet, in reading it, we don't get a full sense of who that "enemy" is. As the 9/11 Commission rightfully pointed out, "The enemy is not just 'terrorism,' some generic evil...The catastrophic threat at this moment in history is more specific. It is the threat posed by *Islamist* terrorism - especially the al-Qaeda network, its affiliates, and its ideology." President Bush's October 6th speech addressed in detail the ideology behind terrorist acts and identified the enemy by many terms, including "Islamic radicalism." That a large majority of this report's Foreign Terrorist Organizations are inspired by radical Islam is a fact, which merits greater emphasis, I believe.

To be sure, this is an improved report, but it can be better. Our goal should be to challenge nations to do better. Our ambassador's hand in Nairobi may be strengthened - but in other countries, a fuller and sharper-edged report would more effectively press our counter-terrorism agenda."

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